

# **203<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR)**

## **Report**

8<sup>th</sup> June 2015  
ECO Secretariat-Tehran

## Report

2. The 203<sup>rd</sup> CPR meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Majid Bizmark, Permanent Representative/Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran. It was attended by the Ambassadors, the Permanent Representatives/Representatives of all ECO Member States except Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The ECO Secretary General along with concerned officials of the Secretariat also attended the Meeting. The list of participants is attached as Annex-I.

### **Agenda Item No.1**

#### Adoption of the Agenda

3. The Council adopted the following agenda for deliberations:

1. Adoption of the Draft Agenda
2. Adoption of the Draft Report of the 202<sup>nd</sup> CPR meeting
3. Implementation of the EPG Recommendations and ECO Reform Process:
  - i. Approval of the first package of the the proposed decisions by the Working Group
  - ii. Other issues
4. Preparation for the Extraordinary Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting
  - i. Date of the Meeting
  - ii. Other issues
5. Administrative matters
  - i. Appointment of the next Secretary General
  - ii. Appointment of the Deputy Secretary General
  - iii. Recommendations of the Selection Panel
6. Any other business
7. Date of the next CPR Meeting

### **Agenda Item No.2**

#### Adoption of the Draft Report of 202<sup>nd</sup> CPR meeting

4. The Council adopted the Draft Report of 202<sup>nd</sup> CPR meeting, along with amendments proposed by the Republic of Turkey which have been reflected appropriately in the Report and circulated among the Member States vide Secretariat's Notes Verbale No. ECO/202<sup>nd</sup> CPR/2015/868 dated 9<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

### **Agenda Item No.3**

#### Implementation of the EPG Recommendations and ECO Reform Process:

*i. Approval of the first package of the proposed decisions by the Working Group*

5. The Working Group on the Implementation of the EPG Recommendations has so far drafted several decisions for the implementation of EPG recommendations which were circulated to the Member States through its Note Verbale No. No.CFU/201<sup>st</sup> CPR/2015/420 dated 24<sup>th</sup> March 2015. The 201<sup>st</sup> CPR Meeting discussed the matter and requested the Working Group to submit the first package of the proposed decisions for approval. Accordingly, the Working Group resumed its work and discussed the first package, including possible decisions on arrears and scale of assessments.

6. The 202<sup>nd</sup> CPR Meeting was informed about the outcomes of the Working Group meetings. The Secretariat informed the CPR that Working Group had agreed on the proposed "Five-year Calendar of ECO Principal Meetings". Therefore, the first package of proposed decisions includes the 35 proposed decisions (as already circulated to the Member States through Note Verbale CFU/201<sup>st</sup> CPR/2015/420) and the proposed "Five-year Calendar of ECO Principal Meetings". Accordingly, the Council agreed that the first package of the proposed decisions may be considered by the Member States with a view to early decision on their approval.

7. The Ambassador of Turkey informed the 203<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Council that his authorities had required more time to study these proposed decisions. Therefore, the decision on the first package may be deferred to the next CPR meeting. Pakistani delegation also reminded that other delegations were also waiting instructions from their governments on EPG Recommendations and these may require some fine tuning before they are submitted for final approval. The Iranian delegation also supported the idea pointing that some important matters such as scale of assessments will require more discussions in presence of those Member States who are not present in this meeting.

8. Accordingly, the Council decided to postpone decision on the first package to its 204<sup>th</sup> meeting.

9.

*ii. Other issues*

10. The Secretary General and the Chairman of the Working Group (Iran) briefed the Council on the Working Group's continued work to prepare the second package of the proposed decisions on the implementation of the recommendations of EPG, including those related to the efficiency of the ECO Secretariat, which had been discussed in the Working Group meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2015.

#### **Agenda Item No.4**

##### Preparation for the Extraordinary Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting

*i. Date of the Meeting*

11. The Extraordinary COM meeting, scheduled for 8 June 2015 was postponed due to postponement of the NAM Ministerial Meeting. The 202<sup>nd</sup> CPR meeting was informed by the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran that the new date for the COM meeting would be communicated to the Member States shortly.

12. The Iranian delegation informed the Council that the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has fixed 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> July, 2015 for convening the NAM Ministerial meeting and is planning to organize the Extraordinary COM meeting in the afternoon of Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July, 2015. The formal confirmation will be communicated to the ECO Secretariat soon. The Council decided that its 204<sup>th</sup> meeting be held on 22 July 2015 and serves as the preparatory meeting for the COM, enabling also the participation of the capital-based senior officials in the discussions.

*ii. Other issues*

13. The Secretariat reminded the Council that the critical issue of "Scale of Assessments" for the post 2015 is on the Agenda of the COM and requested the Council to make necessary preparations for possible decision by the Ministers. The Iranian delegation informed that during the Working Group meetings, consensus could not be achieved on the new scale of assessments. He proposed that a special CPR meeting may be convened to build consensus on the issue before the COM meeting. The Pakistan delegation was of the view that consensus is necessary prior to COM meeting otherwise decision on the issue in COM meeting will be a remote possibility.

14. The Ambassador of Turkey said that it seems there is lack of interest and will in reaching a consensus on the issue of "Scale of Assessments" and expressed doubts that the positions expressed by Member states in the Working Group would be changed at the CPR level. However, he said that his country has no objection to a special CPR meeting on scale of assessments. .

15. The Afghan Ambassador informed that the Government of Afghanistan has agreed with the EPG proposed scale of 1.78% which had been formally communicated to the Secretariat. Secretariat while appreciating the new position by Afghanistan reminded that that the Working Group had already agreed on the need for minimum rate of 2% and maximum rate of 22% for the new scale of assessments. Secretary General also shared his views that there should be no maximum rate enabling those Member States who may wish to pay more than 22%. On the way to proceed discussions on the

scale of assessments, Secretary General said that in case of no breakthrough in at the level of Working Group or CPR, the Ministers may themselves take a decision.

16. After protracted deliberations, the Council decided to convene a **Special CPR meeting** on **Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2015 at 1000 hours** at the Secretariat to discuss the matter of “Scale of Assessments”.

#### **Agenda Item No.5**

##### Administrative matters

*i. Appointment of the next Secretary General*

17. The 202<sup>nd</sup> CPR meeting decided that pending the next meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers, the concurrence of honourable Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the ECO Member States with the candidacy of Turkish nominee H.E. Ambassador Halil Ibrahim Akca may be sought through circulation. Accordingly, the Secretariat through its Note Verbale No. ADM/PER/2015/748 dated 14 May 2015, requested the Member States to ensure concurrence of their honourable Ministers of Foreign Affairs with this appointment as per Articles IX-2 and XII-1 of the Treaty of Izmir.

18. The Secretariat briefed the Council that it had so far received concurrence, in writing, from Kyrgyz Republic and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for the appointment of new Secretary General. Ambassadors of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and Republic of Azerbaijan informed the Council that their respective Governments had agreed with the appointment of the Turkish candidate. They further informed that the written formal consent will be sent to the Secretariat shortly.

19. The Iranian delegation said that since the date for Extraordinary COM is almost final, the appointment of new Secretary General may be done by COM meeting. The Pakistan delegation referred to decision by the 202<sup>nd</sup> CPR meeting to make the appointment through circulation and emphasized on the need to proceed through circulation followed by formal approval by COM. The Turkish Ambassador also reminded that as stated by the Iranian delegation, the date of the COM meeting was still to be formally confirmed. Therefore, it is prudent to go through the circulation which was agreed in the last CPR meeting.

20. The Chairman summarized the discussions and said that we would continue in line with the decision of the last meeting and the consent to the appointment should come through circulation with the formal final approval by COM Meeting.

21. Ambassador of Turkey also said that Ambassador Halil Ibrahim Akca, the Turkish candidate for the post of ECO secretary General will be able to take up his duties as of 13 August 2015. However, Ambassador raised the possibility of his joining the Secretariat with one month delay, namely, as of Mid September 2015.

ii. Appointment of the Deputy Secretary General

22. The tenure of Mr. Hayri Maraslioglu (Turkish national), ECO Deputy Secretary General (T&I,AIT&IR) will come to an end on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2015. The 10<sup>th</sup> COM meeting (Tehran, June 2000) decided that "... during the term that the post of Secretary General goes to one of the Founding Members, two posts of Deputy Secretaries General shall go to other Founding Members and one to a Non-Founding Member". The post of Secretary General will rotate to Republic of Turkey (a founding member) as of 13 August 2015. Therefore, the post of Deputy Secretary General shall be filled by a candidate from non-founding Members. As per Article 6 of the ECO Staff Regulations "*appointment to the post of Deputy Secretary General in Category-I shall be made by the Council of Ministers (COM) at the recommendation of the Council of Permanent Representatives*".

23. In response to a question raised whether the DSG from Turkey should end his tenure as of 13 August 2015 when the new Secretary General from Turkey takes up his duties, or the DSG can complete his tenure on 3 November 2015, the Secretary General explained that there is no provision in the rules on how to deal with such situation and the matter have to be decided by the Member States.

24. The Secretary General also referred to the mandate for establishing new modalities for the appointments of the Secretary General and Deputies Secretary General and shared his overall views in this regard. He said that after the incoming Secretary General from Turkey, the post should rotate among all Member States. All Member States, regardless of any criteria, should have equal opportunity to lead the Secretariat. But when it comes to distribution of other posts, including the DSG and director posts, there should be definitive criteria such as contributions.

25. Ambassador of Azerbaijan supported the opinion of the ECO Secretary General and said that all Member States should have the chance to lead the Organization. He mentioned that we should explore the reasons why some Member States have not fulfilled their responsibility of paying the financial contributions to the Organization. He further emphasized that we should take into consideration the positions, activities approach and contributions of the Member States while making any appointment in the Organization.

26. The Iranian delegation supported the idea of giving chance to other Member States to lead the Organization, especially those which are ready to make more contributions to the Organization and play active role in the activities of the Organization. On the post of Deputy Secretary General, he said as this post goes to the non-founding members, these countries may make a compromise among themselves and agree on a candidate for this post.

27. The Council decided that the incumbent, Mr. Maraslioglu may continue until the end of his tenure, namely, 3 November 2015. The Secretariat was mandated to send a formal Note circulating vacancy announcement among Member States. The interested

non-founding Member States will then present their nominations to the Secretariat for subsequent consultations and final recommendation by CPR and decision by COM.

iii. Recommendations of the Selection Panel

(a) Programme Officer (Category-II, P1)

28. The Council appointed Mr. Abolfazl Azizipanah (**Iranian national**), as Programme Officer, (Category-II, P2) in place of Mr. Reza Samieifard, for a period of four years effective from the date of his joining the Secretariat.

(b) Programme Officer Transport & Communication (Category-II, P1)

29. Upon the consent by Republic of Kazakhstan and under Article 19.2.4 of the ECO Staff Regulations, the Council authorized the Secretary General to re-employ Ms. Zukhra Abisheva (Kazakh National), as Programme Officer (Category-II, P1) for another term of one year effective from 28<sup>th</sup> June, 2015.

**Agenda Item No.6**

Any other business

30. Under this agenda item, the Ambassador of Turkey referred to issue of extension of the observer status of two ECO Observers i.e. Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States and the Turkish Cypriot State and expressed his views that as the two week silence procedure, decided by the CPR held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2015, has passed it is understood that their applications for extension will be recommended by the CPR to the upcoming COM meeting for final decision.

31. Highlighting the financial constraints of the Secretariat, the Secretary General requested the Member States who have not done so to speed up payment of their financial contributions.

**Agenda Item No.7**

Date of the next CPR meeting

32. The Council decided to hold the following meetings:

- (i) **Special CPR meeting** on scale of assessments to be held on **Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2015 at 1000 hours** at the ECO Secretariat.
- (ii) **Regular CPR meeting** to be held on **Wednesday, 22nd July, 2015** at 1000 hours at the ECO Secretariat. This meeting will also serve as preparatory meeting for the Extraordinary COM meeting.

\*\*\*\*\*

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS****The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan:**

- H.E. Dr. Nasser Ahmad Noor, Ambassador
- Ms. Zahra Badaghi, Administrative Assistant

**The Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan:**

- H.E. Mr. Javanshir Akhundov, Ambassador
- Mr. Kanan Nazarov, Counsellor

**The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran:**

- H.E. Mr. Majid Bizmark, Permanent Representative/Director General
- Mr. Abulfazl Mohammad Alikhani, Director of ECO Affairs Bureau
- Mr. Ahmad Safari, Deputy Director of ECO Affairs Bureau
- Mr. Tofiqh Sedigh Mostahkam, Senior Expert, ECO Affairs Bureau

**The Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic:**

- Mr. Kochorbaev Musa, First Secretary

**The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan:**

- Mr. Muhammad Zeeshan Ahmad, Counsellor

**The Embassy of the Republic of Turkey:**

- H.E. Mr. Riza Hakan TEKİN, Ambassador
- Ms. Sevgi İlhan, Second Secretary

**The ECO Secretariat:**

- H.E. Mr. Shamil Aleskerov, Secretary General
- Mr. Hayri Maraslioglu, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Seyed Jalaledin Alavi Sabzevari, Deputy Secretary General
- Mrs. Mavjuda Nurova, Assistant Director (CFU)
- Mr. Gaffar Erbek, Chef de Cabinet
- Mr. Mahmoud Khoubkar, Legal Adviser
- Mr. Israr Ahmad Khan, Steno-Secretary
- Ms. Aynur Mammadova, Russian Translator
- Mr. Amir Mohammad Javaheri, Persian Translator
- Mr. Hamid Reza Soltani, Protocol Officer

\*\*\*\*\*